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ABSTRACT

This handbook, addressed to parents and others responsible for the safety of children, presents information on fire hazards, prevention and protection. Emphasizing an early start to fire safety training, it outlines the basic facts of fire safety education, listing the most frequent causes of fire and suggesting the organization of a Family Fire Control team for the home. Guidelines for establishing a family fire safety code are suggested. Topics covered in the pamphlet include smoking, leaving children unsupervised, clothing flammability, home furnaces and small heaters, fireplaces, kitchen hazards, home appliances and power equipment safety rules. The dangers of various fuels and of electricity are described. A section is devoted to controlling outdoor fires, and a section on fire fighting includes a model home exit drill. (BF)

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TEACH CHILDREN FIRE WILL BURN

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
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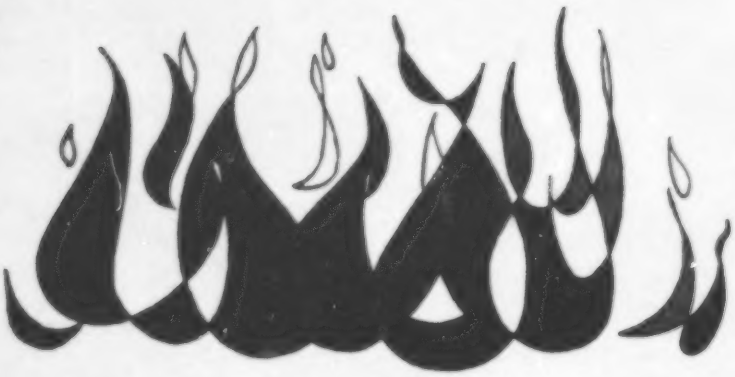


A FIRE EVERY 57 SECONDS

Fires and bad burn accidents can happen anywhere. Newspapers from coast to coast are continually shocking us with headlines such as: "Flash Fire Traps Children Left Home Alone," "Child Badly Burned, Playing With Matches," "Barbecue Fire Fatal To Boy."

Private homes catch on fire every 57 seconds in the U.S.A. These fires happen so often that next to injuries caused by traffic accidents, they are the leading cause of death for children under 5 and the fourth leading cause for the death of children from 5 to 14.

Many of these tragedies would not happen if children had better training, and if families made escape plans and had regular fire drills.

This pamphlet is directed to parents and to all who have the care and responsibility of children. It has a special message for those who are inclined to feel that fire is something that happens to other people's homes but will never happen to theirs.

TRAINING SAVES CHILDREN'S LIVES

Today, a child's world, the world of all of us, is so filled with things that shock, burn, explode, injure and kill, that guidance is necessary. You and your children must learn to live with fire without injury - - - for live with it, we must.

START TRAINING EARLY Little children should understand what the word "hot" means. Warn a small child that if he touches a hot plate "It will burn." If he still insists on feeling of it, don't keep him from having the experience by shouting, "No!" You've warned him. Now let him touch, feel and remember heat. (Of course, don't let him touch intense heat that will injure him.) Learning in the least painful way possible may save him from real pain later.

WHEN HE IS OLDER When you feel your child is old enough, show him how to strike a match—away from himself with the cover flap closed: how to blow it out, right away, after using it, and to make sure it is not smoldering. Explain why matches must be lighted only when a parent is present. If a child is taught to do safely the things he wants to do, he is less likely to hurt himself trying to learn them without your help.

LET HIM WATCH FIRE-BUILDING When you build a fire in the fireplace, or a bonfire, or a trash fire, tell and show him why fire burns (page 3). Explain how quickly it can blaze up, burn houses and people.

WHY FIRE BURNS

It takes just these **3** things coming together to make a fire burn in a few seconds. But if you take away any **1** of the **3**, a fire won't catch, and even if it is burning, it will go out:

1. FUEL

Fuel can be carelessly stored rubbish like old papers, old clothes, rags, spilled oil, grease on a stove. Of course, it can be necessary fuel like wood, coal, oil or gas which we burn to keep warm and to cook. But we have to light it with . . .

2. HEAT

Heat can come from a lighted match, cigarette or hot ashes, or hot electrical wires. In fact, anything hot enough can start fuel to burning. But fuel won't burn at all without . . .

3. AIR

Air feeds and fans the flames. Shut off air and you smother a fire. Air from open windows, transoms and doors feed and spread a fire. So close them if you can do it quickly in case of fire. But the first safety rule is to get out of the house fast if the fire is spreading.

HOW FIRE HARMS

INJURIES HAPPEN IN A FLASH Without frightening children make it clear to them how the sudden blaze can injure them, can scar and even cripple them permanently if the burns are bad enough. Everyone, including the babysitter, should understand that this can happen when people aren't careful.

HOW SERIOUS IT IS The seriousness of a burn injury depends upon how deep the burn is, and how much of the body is scorched by the fire. Fire can destroy the skin cells so that they can never grow again and this causes deep scars and can also cripple the body. Or it can blister or redden large parts of the body which may not seem so serious at first but can be very painful and dangerous.

CLOTHING BURNS ARE DEEPER When clothing catches on fire as it often does, the burns are more serious because the cloth spreads the fire and creates more heat. This serious burn often cripples and scars. The treatment requires long and expensive hospital care. This is why flame retardant clothing is needed.

SMOKE IS POISONOUS Actually smoke kills more people than flames do because it can poison the air before anyone realizes it. Smoke contains poisonous gases, including carbon monoxide, which can make those who breathe it become unconscious. It is especially dangerous when people are sleeping for they may not waken at all. Smoke often makes escape impossible.

YOU NEEDN'T HAVE A FIRE

IF YOU AVOID THE DANGERS Experts on fire control name the following as the most frequent causes of fire: (1) faulty heaters and cooking equipment (2) careless smoking (3) misuse of electricity (4) children playing with matches (5) mishandling of flammable liquids such as gasoline (6) faulty chimneys and roofs (7) careless storage of rubbish.

IF YOU INSPECT YOUR HOUSE There are 12 times as many fires in private homes as in factories. One big reason is that factories must conform to safety codes. So read this booklet and then inspect your house room by room for fire hazards you may not have noticed before. Does it conform to your own safety code?

IF YOU HAVE FAMILY TEAMWORK While you are writing your family fire safety code, you might organize a Family Fire Control Team choosing a captain to lead it. Use the information in this pamphlet to discuss fire hazards, prevention and protection. And you might have the Family Fire Control Team inspect your house and yard to find how many of these hazards they can spot. Then remove them as soon as you can.

Rule out careless smoking

Be sure that all the smokers in your house understand that careless smoking destroys thousands of homes every year; that they must follow safe-smoking rules to protect their own home. People

often die in such fires so take these precautions:

- Keep plenty of big, deep, untippable ashtrays in every room.
- Never put lighted cigarettes on shelf or table edges.
- Use a metal container or toilet drain to dispose of stubs and ashes, never throw them into the trashbasket.
- Never throw trash into ashtrays where it can catch on fire.
- Have a strict rule that nobody should smoke in bed.
- Before going to bed or going out, inspect furniture for hidden smoldering cigarettes, after people have been smoking.
- Don't go off and leave a cigarette burning; put it out.

Keep matches from children

DON'T TEMPT SMALL CHILDREN Children who play with matches, and the careless smoker account for 1 out of every 5 home fires. You can prevent most of these accidents by being careful. Put matches and lighters high out of the reach and out of sight of little children.

Don't keep them scattered around the room or on low tables where they invite young explorers. Avoid fire tragedies. Store old fashioned "strike-anywhere" matches in closed metal cans on shelves.

CHILDREN AT HOME ALONE SET FIRES Firemen say that one third of all the children who die from fires in private homes are alone when the fire starts. Children often set these fires, themselves, playing with matches, lighters and pilot lights when no adult is there to watch them. Frightened, they often hide in the house instead of reporting a fire, and are killed by smoke or burned to death. No matter how brief your errand, never leave young children alone in the house. It's safer to take them with you.

Most clothing will burn—watch it!

SOME CLOTHING FABRICS ARE FLAME RESISTANT But there are not a lot of these in the stores, and there won't be until, you, the customer creates the demand. Just about all fabrics that you buy **will burn.** Most synthetic fabrics burn less easily than those made of natural fibers with the exception of wool. Wool is slow to ignite, slow to burn. When synthetic fibers and blends of natural and synthetic fibers do burn on the body, they melt and cause deep burns often requiring long, painful and expensive hospitalization.

THESE WEAVES ARE MORE FLAMMABLE Open or loose-textured fabrics are more flammable than tightly woven ones. Lightweights or sheers catch and burn faster than heavy, durable ones which are safer for your children's play clothes. Fuzzy fabrics with brushed or napped surface can catch fire easily and burn quickly. Fuzzy-surfaced fabrics of synthetic fibers do not flash, but can burn and melt. If the fiber itself resists burning (like wool) then any clothing made from it resists burning.

AN AIRY CUT LETS A FIRE SPREAD A garment that is loose fitting, ruffled, flaring, that lets the air circulate inside it, burns more easily and quickly. Full, sweeping skirts and sleeves brush against fire sources more readily and are fuel for fire.

Avoid accidents with heaters

OPERATE THEM CAREFULLY Particularly in the South and Southwest, heaters often provide the only source of heat in homes and they

cause many accidents, burn many children. Whether operated by oil, gas or electricity, each has its own hazards and should be installed and operated strictly according to directions by experienced persons. Give them frequent checkups, immediate repair when needed, and always use them in well ventilated rooms.

PLACE THEM WITH CARE Buy a heater that won't tip and place it on level flooring. Keep it out of hallways, away from doors or stairs where it might block escape in a fire. Keep it away from flammable things like beds, upholstered furniture, curtains, drying clothes. Above all, keep small children at safe distance from heaters.

OIL HEATERS When fueling oil units, don't overfill them, nor fill a portable heater while it is burning or still hot. Wipe up oil spills right away. With kerosene, look out for possible burner flooding and flare-ups. Vent all fixed heating units to the outside. Keep flue pipes clean and tight.

ELECTRIC HEATERS Be careful not to overload the circuit with the heaters (see page 12). Many require separate circuit. Heating coils should have guards to prevent contact with clothing which causes dangerous clothing burns.

GAS HEATERS Look out for gas leaks. Use guards over flames. Vent them where instructions call for it. Be sure gas piping is properly installed and maintained.

HOT METAL FLOOR GRILLES Hot air furnace grilles in floor areas become hot enough to burn the bare feet of anyone who forgets about them, and children often do and are seriously burned. So if you must have them, place them well out of traffic if you can. You can equip the heater with temperature limiting controls that prevent burning. If you place a rug over a grille in the summer, remove it before the heat is resumed or you could have a fire.

SCREEN THE FIREPLACE Both gas logs and woodburning fireplaces need firescreens to shield children from accidents and to keep wood sparks from flying into the room. Fix the andirons so logs cannot roll off onto the floor. Never use kerosene or gasoline on or near the fire. It is very dangerous to burn trash or evergreens in fireplaces. Before you leave the house or go to bed, it is best to extinguish the fire. In any case, it should be very low, the chimney damper partially closed, and the screen adjusted.

Danger in the kitchen!

KITCHENS ARE ACCIDENT AREAS This is where many painful burns occur. It is a dangerous place to turn a small child loose to play and to prowl unwatched, so pop him into a high chair or playpen where he can see what goes on safely when you can't give him full attention.

PREVENT SCALDING ACCIDENTS Small children often pull pots full of hot food down upon themselves by grabbing pot handles. Avoid this by turning handles away from the line of traffic. Keep cups and pots of hot coffee well back from the table edge, too.

KEEP THE STOVE AREA FREE OF GREASE Grease fires flare up quickly, flames spread and burn fiercely causing painful burn injuries. Never use water to put out a grease fire. (See page 19.)

REMOVE FLAMMABLE THINGS Don't place a range under a window or have anything flammable near the stove. Anchor all kitchen curtains so they do not blow across flames. Better buy flame retardant curtains and potholders. Hang anything flammable, dishtowels, potholders at safe distance. Keep the trashbasket away and empty it often. Avoid reaching over lighted burners. Flowing-sleeve robes are dangerous costumes to wear when you are cooking.

DON'T TAKE CHANCES WITH A FURNACE

HAVE EXPERT INSTALLATION The furnace, the boiler and water heater must be installed by experts following the manufacturer's instructions and guidance by local code authorities. Don't tamper with the heat equipment, itself, or the installation. Follow operating instructions carefully. Be careful not to block off grilles and louvers or other passageways to furnaces in enclosed spaces. Unless you have expert advice don't enclose boilers or furnaces that are installed in basements.

9

REGULAR INSPECTION IS IMPORTANT All furnaces should be inspected and serviced at regular intervals. Oil furnaces should be cleaned, oiled and adjusted by a serviceman who should look for leaking oil lines and rusty, clogged and damaged flues. Oil burner tanks and units also should have a safety shut-off such as a fusible link. Soot should be cleaned out of both oil and coal burning furnaces once a year when furnace is not in use. In the coal burning furnace, the ash pit cleanout in the chimney should have secure metal door. Watch for changes in water gauge, meters and thermometers. They can indicate trouble.

CALL A SERVICEMAN TO TURN ON A GAS FURNACE It takes the technical skill of a serviceman to check a furnace for gas leaks and to put it back into operation properly. Have furnaces inspected and serviced every year.

LIVE SAFELY USING GAS

DON'T LET CHILDREN PLAY WITH STOVES The pilot lights and burners fascinate children. They frequently burn themselves and set the house on fire playing with them. Teach children not to touch the stove.

FLASHBACKS CAN BE DANGEROUS Keep children at safe distance when you light the oven or water heater. Flashbacks can happen when a match is used instead of a pilot light if gas has accumulated in the interval before the lighting. It is best to air the oven before lighting it with a match. Keep the manufacturer's directions handy so that you can refer to them in lighting the water heater. Modern water heaters are automatically lighted and safe, but the old manually operated heaters need caution in handling.

IF YOU SMELL GAS IN THE HOUSE Open all the windows immediately if there is a strong odor of gas in the house. Don't turn on any lights. The electric spark from the flip of a switch, or the lighting of a match could cause an explosion. Call the gas company or police for expert help. Gas escaping from an appliance may accumulate dangerously in closed rooms. Keep rooms ventilated and your equipment in good repair.

BUY SAFE EQUIPMENT Always look for the American Gas Asso-

ciation label which tells you that an appliance has been tested for safety.

DON'T UNDERESTIMATE ELECTRIC POWER

KEEP ELECTRICITY IN ITS PLACE Electricity flows from the power plant through transmission lines into your home, and through electrical equipments then back to earth to complete an electric circuit. If it escapes its normal path through some exposed wiring, it then finds another path back to earth which can be through YOUR body.

THE BODY CONDUCTS ELECTRICITY When the current escapes through broken insulation, it may flow into the metal frame of an appliance and then through your body if you touch the metal while you are directly or indirectly in contact with earth. This is because your body is made up largely of water and both metal and water conduct the current. You can receive a severe or even fatal shock if you are standing on anything damp because you provide the complete circuit for the current to return back to earth. On a dry floor, you are less apt to receive that shock. Dry wood does not conduct it.

MAKE REPAIRS IMMEDIATELY Never disregard any sign of trouble, overheating, sparking, stalling, diminishing power or strange sounds. Disconnect the appliance if you feel the slightest shock. These are warnings to make repair or replacement immediately.

DON'T FORGET POWER SAFETY RULES

- Buy equipment that has been safety-tested. You can tell it by the Underwriters' Laboratories' label.
- Always read and follow all manufacturers' directions.
- Don't let anything electric get wet for this causes shocks.
- Major appliances should be installed and repaired by professional servicemen.
- Electrical equipment should be grounded as follow:

A THIRD WIRE DRAINS LEAKING CURRENT The grounding of the usual 120 volt electrical system is done through a third wire and three-prong plug which drains off the leaking current if it escapes through broken insulation (as described before). Hire a qualified electrician to do the grounding and change two-hole outlets to the safer three-hole type.

KITCHEN AND LAUNDRY APPLIANCES All heavy appliances should be grounded and must have a separate 20 ampere circuit. It takes a qualified electrician to install them, as it does to install or extend your wiring.

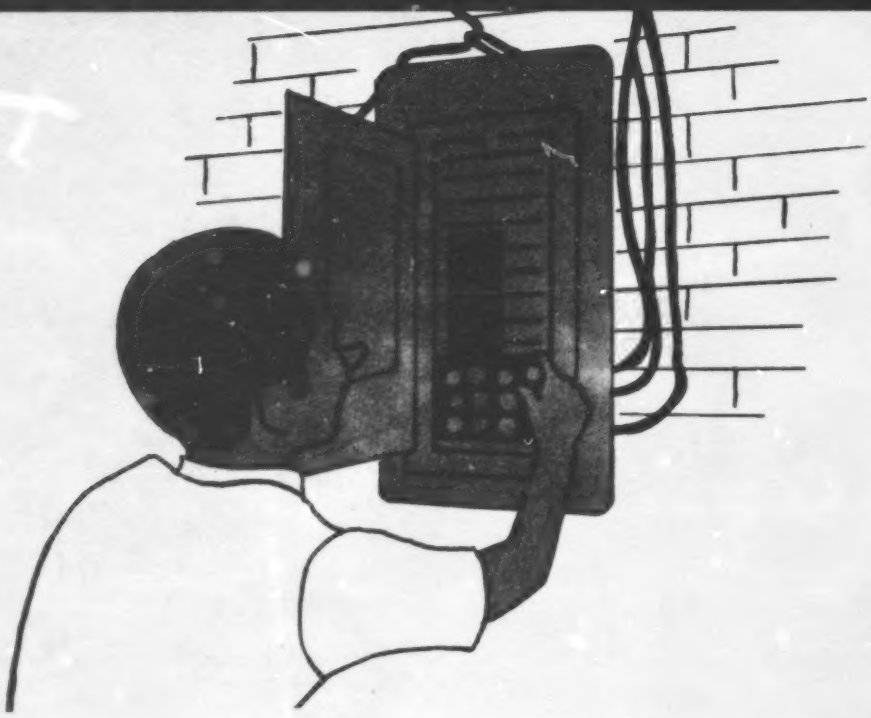
TELEVISION SETS AND RADIOS TV antenna masts and lead-in wires should be grounded for lightning protection. TVs and radios need circulating air to cool them so place them so the ventilating holes are not against the wall. Keep the covers on the backs.

OVERLOADED CIRCUITS CAN CAUSE FIRES People are using so many appliances and worksavers that run by electricity that in many cases they overfuse and overload circuits. This is particularly true in older houses which were not wired for today's needs. This can cause fires. Use the right size fuse and stay within the capacity of the circuit. If it isn't sufficient for the equipment you are using, have an electrical contractor provide your house with higher capacity service.

ADD THE TOTAL WATTS IN USE An average circuit will carry 1400 watts. The label of an appliance usually states how many watts it uses. Examine each label and add the total number you may be using during a peak load. Is it within the safety limits of the fuse?

FUSES AND CIRCUIT BREAKERS WARN YOU When a fuse blows or the circuit breaker cuts off the current, this can be telling you to turn off some of the equipment. It usually means that you are overloading the circuit. But if you reduce the load and a fresh fuse blows right away, there may be a defective wire or part in some of your equipment, or there may be a short circuit somewhere. If so, you need an electrician to make repairs immediately. Circuit breakers take the place of fuse boxes in some houses. They automatically cut off the current in case of trouble. When this is remedied, you must reset the switch to restore the current.

REPLACE A FUSE WITH THE CORRECT SIZE The usual household lighting circuit requires a 15 ampere fuse. Always replace this with the same size. (Never a copper penny!) A stepped up size can over-



heat wires and start a fire. Heavy appliances (freezers, washing machines) need special fuses.

AN OUTLET FOR EACH APPLIANCE It is safer and it looks better if you can install enough outlets so that each appliance has its own. A cluster of plugs and extension cords can overload the wiring. If you can, install outlets every six feet along the floor line. It costs less to have a rewiring job than it does to have a fire.

GET THE RIGHT EXTENSION CORD Small appliances like lamps take regular extension cords while the larger appliances need special heavy duty cords. If an appliance is exposed to oil or moisture the cord must have oil resistance and waterproof insulation. It also should have the Underwriters' Laboratories' label.

WORN CORDS CAN CAUSE ACCIDENTS You risk having shorts, shocks and fire if you use a worn extension cord. It is safer to replace it than to patch it. It is not safe to nail, tack or knot a cord, or to run it under rugs and through doorways. Keep it away from radiators and high heat. All these things destroy insulation. Let an appliance cool before you wrap a cord around it, and then not too tightly. Examine

the plug for loose, worn threads. Are the screws tight? They should hold wires firmly inside the plug.

DANGLING UNUSED CORDS ARE DANGEROUS Remove them when not in use. Small children (and pets) have been badly burned by chewing these. Pull them out by the plug. Don't jerk them by the cord. Close wall sockets with plug covers to prevent youngsters from sticking pins into openings.

ELECTRIC IRONS START MANY FIRES If you must leave your ironing even briefly, disconnect the electric iron. Otherwise it can fall on fabric, burn through and start a blaze. Or it might fall on a child. You are safer if you use a flame resistant ironing board cover.

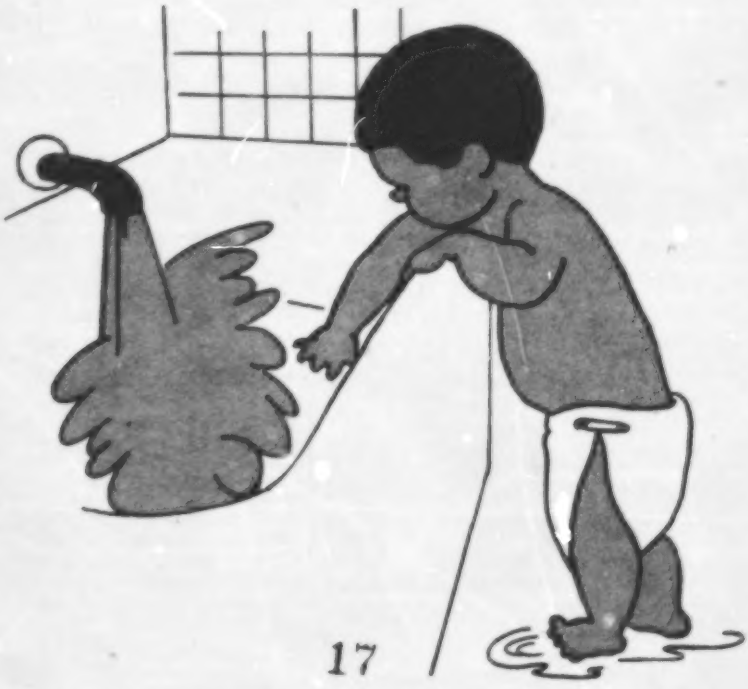
BEFORE YOU CLEAN A TOASTER Disconnect it before you clean the toaster, also before using anything metal for removing the toast.

BUY A COFFEE POT THAT'S SAFE The safe coffee pot is designed with a wide base with rubber caps on the bottom and it isn't top-heavy. Lid should lock on, spout should be small, the electric cord should be retractable so a child cannot jerk it off by a dangling cord.

TIME THAT SUNLAMP When you expose a child, or when anybody uses a sunlamp, set the alarm clock or timer. Otherwise a bad burn can result. Follow the manufacturer's directions exactly. It is a good idea to consult a doctor on the use of it and the timing. A young child's skin can take less of those powerful rays than can an adult. Protect eyes with special sunlamp glasses.

PLAY SAFE WITH ELECTRIC TOYS Be sure that they have been tested for safety. Look for the Underwriters' Laboratories' label. An adult always should be near to see that manufacturer's directions are followed, including the length of time it is safe to use the toy. Set up electric trains and tracks on flame retardant-painted, smooth plywood. Never place them near or under Christmas trees.

A WET ELECTRICAL APPLIANCE IS DANGEROUS Remember that water and electricity aren't teammates. Never touch an electrical appliance with wet or sweaty hands. None of the outdoor equipment should be used when the lawn or garden is wet or during a rain. Keep swimmers out of the pool when a thunder storm comes up, or when the electric filter or pump is in use. Radios, TVs and lamps should be at a safe distance from the poolside or bathtub so that they will have no contact with water.



BE CAREFUL WITH HOT WATER Thousands of children are burned by bath water. You can avoid this by running the cool water first then adding hot water until it is warm enough. This avoids scaldings. The temperature of the water heater should be regulated far below scalding—warm not hot. Another safety measure is a valve that controls the blending of hot and cold water out of one faucet. Never leave a small child alone in the bathtub.

ARE YOU STORING UP TROUBLE?

RUBBISH FIRES DESTROY MANY HOMES Ask yourself whether it is worth keeping. Piles of old newspapers, magazines, discarded

furniture, toys and clothing become fire traps. Don't let them clutter stairways, halls or any storage rooms. Keep exits open. Is your basement workshop, your garage free of clutter that can start a fire?

FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS, MOPS, RAGS Any liquid that will burn, oils, paint, paint thinners, cleaning fluids, should be stored in capped metal cans, not in glass or plastic jars, and in well ventilated cabinets nowhere near any kind of fire. Don't smoke near any of these. Some of these flammable liquids, particularly gasoline (which should never be stored in the house) can cause a fire if fumes from them are drawn into the flame of a pilot light in a heater or stove. Oil soaked mops and rags are very flammable. Shut up in a cabinet without ventilation they can cause fire from spontaneous combustion. Better throw them away.

CONTROL FIRE OUT OF DOORS

BURN TRASH CAREFULLY If local laws permit the use of an outdoor trashburner, use one that conforms to the safety standards. Do your burning on windless days with the garden hose hooked up, in case it is needed. Place the trashburner on bare ground or other surface that won't burn, safely removed from trees or fences. Don't stuff it. Burn a little at a time. Have the Christmas tree carted away rather than to burn it yourself. Keep the children at safe distance. Don't leave them alone with the fire. When you finish burning, water down every spark.

OBSERVE THE RULES FOR CAMPFIRES AND COOKOUTS The rules above apply to campfires and cookouts. Get fire permits if they are required and check with forest officers if possible. If a prepared site is not available, scrape away all burnable material for 5 feet on all sides. Build the fire in a shallow pit away from trees, logs and roots. Never burn in very dry or windy weather. Put the fire out with water, stir earth into it, then water it again.

KEEP THE BARBECUE ON THE LEVEL Set up the barbecue grill on even ground so it won't tip. Don't let children and pets romp around it. If you use spray fire lighters, supply the spray **BEFORE** the charcoal is ignited, never afterwards. Remove the spray can far from the grille then light this fire with a taper. Never use gasoline or lighter fluid to hurry any fire for this can be fatal.

FIGHT ONLY SMALL FIRES

NEVER TACKLE A BIG BLAZE In the early moments, a small fire can be put out if you act quickly and use the right method for the particular type of fire. But first, make sure that the children and others get out, and that somebody calls the fire department FAST. People usually wait too long to call for help so that fire gets out of hand. Never let it block your exit. If it spreads, get out fast.

ASK THE FIRE DEPARTMENT ABOUT EXTINGUISHERS If you need help in selecting fire extinguishers, most fire departments will be glad to advise you. It is wise to have an extinguisher for grease and electrical fires in your kitchen. Learn how to use it and keep it filled ready for instant use.

HOW TO USE A HOSE OR EXTINGUISHER Aim the stream at the base of the fire. If the fire is on the floor, sweep the stream from the edge inward. If it is on the wall sweep the stream from the bottom upward. Shoot it into a closet but never go inside, yourself. Don't ventilate the house until the fire is out.

DON'T FORGET—NO WATER ON OIL OR GREASE FIRES! Liquids such as oil, gasoline, grease and paint have to be smothered with dry chemical fire extinguishers (not a water extinguisher) or carbon dioxide or foam, or baking soda, never doused with water. Water spreads such fires.

SMOTHER THE COOKING FIRE If a fire has started from fat, grease or oil in a pan or in an oven:

1 turn off the stove, appliance or oven. Cover the pan, or close the oven taking care not to get yourself burned;

2 or throw baking soda on the blaze. Keep packages of this handy;

3 or use a dry chemical fire extinguisher (never water).

4 Never carry a burning pan to the sink or outdoors.

DON'T USE WATER ON ELECTRICAL FIRES That is, don't use water until all current has been turned off.

1 Turn off the current and if possible unplug the appliance.

2 If you can't do this, use only the extinguisher for an electrical fire. Never throw water on live wires which can produce dangerous shocks.

3 If all current is off, you can then use water.

CLOTHING FIRES NEED QUICK ACTION If anyone's clothing catches on fire don't let this victim run because that would fan the

flames. Quickly, have him lie on the floor, arms folded high on chest to protect face. Have him roll, or roll him slowly, over and over. Better still if you can roll him up on the floor in a heavy wool coat, or wool rug but never in anything cotton or synthetic. Whatever you use, fold it close around the neck to keep flames and fumes from emerging at his head. Have him keep rolling, or roll him, or gently beat his body till fire is out.

USE TEAMWORK ON GRASS FIRES If you see that fire in grass, leaves and brush is getting out of control

1 Immediately call the fire department.

2 Until the firemen come, get neighbors to help with teamwork.

3 Make a 4-foot fire-break path well in front of the fire by raking, digging and wetting down the ground.

4 Knock down the flames with brooms, shovels, and with hose or pails of water.

5 Have someone follow this operation, to put out small sparks.

6 Protect nearby buildings and yards by wetting them down, and close all windows and doors.

7 Wear sturdy denim, woolen, or best of all, flame resistant fabric clothes, and heavy shoes.

8 Keep an escape area free so the fire doesn't trap the firefighters.

MAP OUT AN ESCAPE PLAN

A PLAN CAN BE A LIFESAVER If you have a well-thought-out-plan for escaping out of every room in your house, particularly the bedrooms, this may save lives when seconds count and keep the family from panicking. A bad fire does not burn inch by inch. It can leap through the house, creating temperatures of 800 to 1000 degrees quickly. In such heat, areas far from the original fire can burst into flame.

MARK ESCAPE ROUTES ON PAPER Emergency escape routes are important because fire and smoke spread along the same passages that you normally would take, blocking halls and stairways. Make a rough floor plan marking possible escape routes, the normal route and an emergency route out of every room, especially out of bedrooms. Is there a porch or garage roof to use as emergency exits out of the upper story windows? (If you sleep with bedroom door closed it could keep smoke out long enough for you to escape through a window.) Consider having rope or chain ladders in upstairs rooms.

DISCUSS THE PLAN Hold a Family Fire Control Meeting, go over the plan, ask for suggestions. Assign somebody to help each very young and very elderly member of the household in escaping. Agree on a place outside, to meet and "count noses" to be sure all are out. Emphasize an important rule: once out, stay out till the fire is out.

ESCAPE FROM SMOKE

KEEP CLOSE TO THE FLOOR Both heated air and smoke filled with poisonous fumes tend to rise. It is most important not to breathe much of those fumes. If necessary crawl to escape.

PROTECT YOUR NOSE AND THROAT If you waken to find heavy smoke in your room, tie the thickest cloth you can find quickly, preferably moistened, over your nose, mouth and throat. Crawl close to the floor without breathing deeply along the safest escape route, or to your bedroom window if smoke blocks your escape from the room. Open the window only wide enough to shout for help and to breathe the fresh air until help comes.

IF SMOKE IS NOT HEAVY—TEST! Even if the smell of smoke is light, don't throw open the bedroom door until you have tested it for heat with the palm of your hand. If it is hot, don't open it but shout a warning to others. If it isn't hot, brace yourself against it while opening it a crack. Be ready to shut it fast if you feel a hot draft; if you don't feel heat, quickly get everybody down the stairs and out. Don't stop to dress or even to pick up valuables. You are safer if you sleep with your bedroom door closed. A closed door can hold back smoke, and drafts which fan the fire.

EXIT DRILL IN THE HOME

Remember that regular fire drills can save your family when a fire strikes. Have them at least once a month. Ready?

1. Everyone goes to his bedroom, lies down, doors closed.
2. Sound the fire alarm, a bell, whistle, horn or shout.
3. Jump up and test bedroom doors before opening them.
4. First drill: escape out usual exits, through hall, stairs.
5. Second drill: imagine doors are hot, hall blocked by fire.

   Crawl to emergency exit. Can you open windows and screens?
6. Everybody meets at an outside spot for the "nose count."
7. Pretend to report the fire at nearest alarm box or phone.

   (Impress children to turn in alarm only for a real fire.)
8. Have everyone practice what to say clearly and slowly.

   "I am reporting a fire at. . . . My name is. . . .

A FAMILY FIRE-SAFETY CODE

Have the whole family help you write a fire-safety code for your house. Put it up where everyone can see it. If the children help to make the rules they will remember them and remind others to follow them. Some things you will want to include will be to. . . .

- Learn why fire is so dangerous, how to use it safely.
- Have rules about smoking and safety, such as not to smoke in bed.
- Never play with fire or take chances, ask those who do to stop.
- Store matches and lighters out of reach of small children.
- Never leave small children home alone even for a short time.
- Keep children out of kitchen or away from stove during cooking.
- Keep stove area free of grease and flammable things.
- Use safety-tested equipment. (Look for the Underwriters' Laboratories or American Gas Association label on the name plate which indicates safety-testing.)
- Know and follow the rules when using gas and electricity.
- Store no rubbish. Store and handle flammable liquids with care.
- Follow safety rules with all outdoor fires.
- In case of fire know how and where to call the fire department.
- Plan on paper how to escape if fire blocks the usual exits.
- Practice exit drill in the home, once a month.

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IF YOU NEED MORE INFORMATION ON FIRE PROTECTION

A number of organizations will answer inquiries to assist your fire safety program. You can write:

1 State and local health departments

2 National Fire Protection Association, 60 Batterymarch Street, Boston, Massachusetts 02110

3 American Insurance Association, 85 John Street, New York, 10038

4 National Safety Council, 425 N. Michigan Avenue, Chicago, Illinois 60611

5 American Gas Association, 605 Third Avenue, New York, New York 10016

6 Underwriters' Laboratories, Inc., 207 East Ohio Street, Chicago, Illinois 60611

Many fire insurance agencies also will answer inquiries on fire safety problems.